



educational excellence through leadership, partnership, and innovation

Executive Director's Report November 19, 2009

NEWS



Congratulations to Lynn Reinhart, Shippensburg Area School District, who received the 2009 Thomas W. Holtzman, Jr. Award at the district's board meeting on November 16. She is pictured to the right of Kris Carroll, Shippensburg's superintendent. This award is given annually to an educator within the CAIU who demonstrates exemplary leadership qualities. The award is in honor of Tom Holtzman, highly regarded, long-term superintendent of the Susquehanna Township School District. The CAIU coordinates this award and is joined each year by David Volkman, current superintendent at Susquehanna Twp School District, to determine the winner. Lynn was surprised by her two sisters and mother on award night, who traveled from Lancaster to celebrate the prestigious honor with her.

Work began in earnest this month to develop the 2010-2011 General Operating Budget for the CAIU. This budget supports the basic operations of the CAIU and represents about 6% of our overall operation. The first draft of the budget will be reviewed during a joint meeting of the Board and Superintendents' Finance Committees on December 2, then adjusted as needed and presented to the Superintendents on December 9. The CAIU Board will then review the draft budget at their December meeting. As always, the goal will be to keep any increases in district contributions through basic subsidy withholding to the Act 1 index or lower.

The Capital Region Partnership for Career Development held its third annual Employer Summit to better connect the business community with our K-12 schools. Over 120 participants spent the day learning from one another and generating critical needs over the next several years. Most discussion groups identified the need for improving parents' understanding of post-secondary options for their children.

The Partnership for Career Development also published, presented and began distribution of a unique tool to help educators facilitate student mastery of the Career Education and Work Standards. The Career Portfolio for planning students' future is a student-centered folder in which children can document their experiences and achievements in preparing for work and careers. Many thanks to the businesses and higher education sponsors who contributed to these publications. (See samples of these portfolios at your table. Sponsors ads are on back cover.)

Many of our high school principals, counselors, curriculum directors and superintendents participated in our first annual Redesigning Secondary Schools summit. My keynote address focused on sharing and interpreting our CAIU superintendents' vision for high schools: *Engage, achieve, succeed: options for every learner*. But the big hit was the panel of students who experience those options. They did a terrific job articulating the

value of making sure students have different options from which to choose if they are to stay engaged, achieve their goals, and succeed in “life.”

See attached testimony from the Senate Education Committee briefing held on Tuesday, November 17. I provided an explanation of intermediate units, while my colleagues, Joe O’Brien from Chester County IU and Jim Shields who serves as the PAIU executive director, provided cost-savings documentation and a history of IUs respectively. The purpose of the briefing was to help legislators understand how IUs might be useful in achieving the cost savings anticipated through school district consolidation. The panelists argued that if IUs were operating those services most efficiently at the regional level, substantial school consolidation would likely become unnecessary. The testimony was well-received by the senators.

NOTIFICATION of ACTIVITIES

- On November 3, Mark Hennes and I met with leaders and consultants from the PA Department of Education ostensibly to discuss our role in revising the state academic standards as that project pertains to the PA application for Race to the Top stimulus funding. At their direction, however, Mark and I focused instead on how the intermediate unit system is more efficient than any other at rolling out PDE initiatives.
- On November 4, I delivered a keynote and a closing address to over 200 parents at a Title I conference in Meadville PA. See attached agenda from that conference for additional details.
- On November 5-6 I was in Philadelphia for the monthly PAIU Executive Directors’ meeting. We made headway on the PAIUnet business plan.
- On November 9 I participated in a conference call following individual review of candidates for the PASA Superintendent of the Year. The winner will be announced at the discretion of PASA.
- On November 13, we held a meeting with the Cumberland/Perry County civic leaders interested in the postsecondary options for graduates with special needs to successfully live and work independently or semi-independently in the community. CAIU staff and these advocates will continue to work together.
- On November 17, Bruce and Ellen Eisenberg, who lead the statewide grant project for instructional coaching, and I met with Jim Moran, Vice Chancellor of the PA State System of Higher Education, to discuss possible opportunities to work with higher education institutions on programs involving student teacher, supervising professors, placement teachers and instructional coaches.

Upcoming Activities:

- *Staff Communications Meetings have been scheduled for lunch and/or after work on November 23, 24 and December 1. We try to conduct about two or three opportunities with multiple sessions each year for sharing information, addressing concerns, and generating new ideas. Meetings are completely voluntary.*
- *On November 25 Brian Griffith and I will be meeting with Dr. Audrey Utlej, education transition team leader for Mayor-elect Linda Thompson, to discuss the CAIU’s current and continued role within the Harrisburg School District.*
- *Brian Griffith, Alicia McDonald, Cindy Mortzfeldt and I will be traveling to Austin TX for the annual Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESAs) conference. The conference begins on December 2 and ends on December 5.*

- *Brian Griffith, Holly Brzycki, and I will be traveling to New York City for our second round of meetings with Edison Learning to further develop our partnership agreement to become the sole provider statewide of the Provost catalog of on-line courses.*
- *December 9 marks the date for the annual Capital Region Partnership for Career Development Luncheon for Superintendents. CAIU Board members are also invited to participate and see the student activities focused on career development which will be showcased by each district's students.*
- *December 11 provides another opportunity for our Board to enjoy lunch again with CAIU employees – that is the date of our annual holiday luncheon. Please let me or Rennie know if you would like to participate. There are prizes, music, and of course, great food!*
- *On December 12 Tom Gentzel, Executive Director of PSBA, will be meeting with several of us at the Enola Office to experience the videoconferencing quality we can offer through PAIUnet. PSBA is a potential partner in our regional wide area network.*
- *The Cabinet members will be holding a half-day retreat at the Lemoyne Office on December 21 to work on our efforts to ensure that programs, services and products we develop or distribute to diversify our revenue sources are deliberately and thoroughly embedded in a sound business plan.*